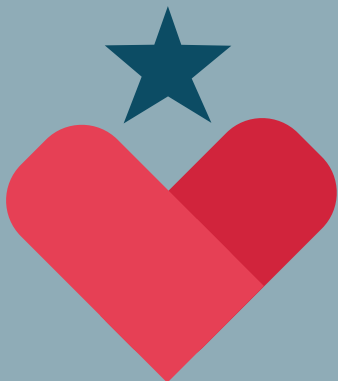


# Common Diagnostic Procedures:

Are you concerned about your past exposure to asbestos during your military service?

Are you experiencing shortness of breath, a persistent cough or other breathing related problems?

You need to speak to your primary care doctor to discuss your symptoms and have some initial testing performed and get a referral to a pulmonary lung specialist who can diagnose asbestos-related lung disease.



## Pulmonary Function Test

PFT is used to determine how the lungs are functioning. The patient blows into an instrument called a spirometer, which measures how much air the lungs can hold and how well air flows in and out.

## Chest X-ray

A painless and noninvasive test that creates pictures of the structures inside your chest such as your heart, lungs, and blood vessels. The different tissues in your chest absorb different amounts of radiation. Lungs are filled with air and normally appear dark.

## Imaging Scans

For people with known exposure to asbestos, some doctors recommend imaging tests such as chest x-rays or computed tomography (CT) scans to look for changes in the lungs that might be signs of mesothelioma or lung cancer.

## CAT scan (Computerized Axial Tomography Scan)

CT scanning is regularly used to screen asbestos-exposed individuals. These scans can sometimes detect asbestosis sooner than chest X-rays. Doctors check the pleural lining around the lungs for signs of asbestos exposure. Inhaling asbestos may lead to the formation of pleural plaques, which can support a diagnosis of asbestosis.

## MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

A procedure in which radio waves and a powerful magnet linked to a computer is used to create detailed pictures of areas inside the body. These pictures can show the difference between normal and diseased tissue.

## Tissue Biopsies and Fluid Cytology

Tissue samples are taken when cancer cells are suspected. The only way to confirm the type of cancer is by taking a tissue biopsy of the cancer cells and having a pathology analysis performed. This step is essential for your doctor to understand the best treatment options for you as well as to have the required information to support a VA or legal claim for asbestos-related ncer.

## Thoracentesis

A procedure to remove fluid or air from the pleural space for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. A needle is inserted into the chest cavity to extract fluid. The fluid can be analyzed (cytology) and in 70% of cases can detect if mesothelioma cancer cells are present. However, it is possible that cancer is present even if the fluid does not indicate any cancer cells.

## Thoracoscopy

In this procedure, the doctor makes a small cut through the chest wall and puts a thin, lighted tube called a thoracoscope into the chest between two ribs. Thoracoscopy allows the doctor to look inside the chest and obtain tissue samples.

## Thoracotomy

An incision to open the chest wall, allowing access to the thoracic organs. It is performed by a surgeon. Thoracotomy is a major surgical maneuver—it is sometimes performed to confirm the diagnosis of lung or chest diseases.

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